EASY FIRE RECOVERY
And
Proposed Nonsignificant Forest Plan Amendments
Final Environmental Impact Statement
Grant and Baker Counties, Oregon

Lead Agency: **USDA Forest Service**

Responsible Official: **Roger Williams, Forest Supervisor**
Malheur National Forest
P. O. Box 909
John Day, OR 97845

For Information Contact: **Rick Larson, Planner**
Prairie City Ranger District
P.O. Box 337
Prairie City, OR 97869
541-820-3391

Abstract: This Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) describes the effects of implementing five alternatives for recovery of National Forest System land and forest that burned in 2002 on the Malheur National Forest. The project is located in the Upper John Day and Upper Middle Fork John Day Watersheds, south of Highway 26 and east of Prairie City, in Grant County, northeastern Oregon. The preferred alternative (Alternative 3) would salvage the economic value of dead and dying trees, reduce upland fuels by removing fire-killed trees through harvest on approximately 1,298 acres, and retain trees and coarse woody debris for site protection, wildlife and soil. Watershed and wildlife improvements in the form of road maintenance and gated road closures would occur. Trees would be planted on about 3,918 acres. Two Forest Plan amendments are proposed to replace Dedicated Old Growth that is now unsuitable habitat after the fire and an amendment to leave snag habitat on a patch basis rather than the standard distribution. Alternative 2 would capture a greater economic value of the dead/dying trees and accomplish more of the fuel reduction. Alternative 4 would accomplish less salvage of the economic value and fuels reduction, and provide another strategy to retain snags for wildlife habitat. Alternative 5 would include only watershed improvement projects and tree planting. Alternative 5 would not salvage any economic value and would not remove large fuels from salvage areas.

The key issues identified during scoping included removing excess wildlife snags, effects of harvest on water quality and fish habitat, detrimental harvest impacts on soils, salvage benefits of fuels reduction, and foregoing economic salvage opportunities.